

Seattle City Council

Housing, Human Services, Health and Culture Committee Meeting

2 p.m. Wednesday, August 11th, 2010

Words' Worth

The Poetry Program of the Seattle City Council

Curated by **aka Mimi Allin**

Today's poet is **David George Kuhns**

David George Kuhns is listed on King County's Touring Arts Roster as a storyteller. Since the 1970s, he's worked in communications, marketing, web content, and has written for newspapers, magazines and technical publications. Recently, he's faced his fears and begun writing creatively. He writes a poem or prose piece each day and posts it on his blog at <http://cyranowriter.wordpress.com>. Kuhns has performed improv poetry at the Seattle Art Museum and as part of Mimi Allin's "Studies in Forgiveness" in front of McCaw Hall.

Inauguration Day Revolution

By David George Kuhns

I wrote this poem shortly after President Obama was sworn in, and sent it, along with this note, to my family:

*I rarely
dare
to share
my poetry.*

*But it is a new day,
and I have something to say.*

I am a revolutionary.
(The words stare out from the page,
although I've seen them in my mind before.
Have I?
I'm not sure!)

I've ridden – and ride — the bus
Not when it was dangerous
But when it is obnoxious.
Not for Civil Rights.
But for Earth's Rights.

I am a revolutionary.

I've dug my hands deep
Not into plantations' soil
Nor sharecropper's clay,
But into the teaming,
Steaming,
Still hot, though winter's day
at minus 20 degrees,
Compost heap,
That I first learned to keep
At ten,
And again,
At thirty,
To get my hands dirty.
And now
I know how
To show younger folk,
That they may pick up
That revolutionary yoke.

I am a revolutionary.

Though not the great-great grandson
Of anyone
Who history would honor
Nor remember.

Mine came across the water as well,
To seek a new life
in a promised land.
A land of opportunity they sought out
Of their own choice.

I follow that dream
Because I am the son of a father
Who has been to many mountaintops,
And rivers and marshes and forests and lakes
And said: "Make no mistake:
This is ours to preserve ...
Or to eradicate."

I am a revolutionary.

As the son of women who
Gave a hand up
When that's all they could do.
Who, when others saw opportunity,
In times of greed,
Looked through with clarity,
And saw need,
And gave with charity.

Even now,
within my soul, I guess,
There is an inner vow:
“I can do no less!”

I am a revolutionary.
Lest there be any confusion
The earth,
and its people,
Are the roots of my revolution.

-- end --

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